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Check-In

Hotel Review: In San Francisco, Rooms With a View

The Lodge at the Presidio, set within a 1,500 acre national park, has one of the city's best vantage points for viewing and visiting the Golden Gate Bridge.

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By Bonnie Tsui



The Lodge at the Presidio occupies a restored 1897 brick Colonial Revival barracks building that housed successive waves of soldiers throughout much of the 20th century. Photo by: Kentyn Reynolds.

Rates

From \$275 a night.

The Basics

Opened in late June, the [Lodge at the Presidio](#) has the unusual perk of having a San Francisco address in the heart of a 1,500-acre national park — the Presidio, an iconic former army post, now home to miles of forested hiking and biking trails, plus museums, restaurants, and even a bowling alley. The sister property to the smaller Inn at the Presidio, which opened in 2012, this is the closest lodging in the city to the Golden Gate Bridge, where, on a recent visit, foghorn blasts sounded from a seemingly invisible source socked away in white, misty drifts (a.k.a. Karl the Fog, in local parlance). The hotel is situated in a restored 1897 brick Colonial Revival barracks building that housed successive waves of soldiers throughout much of the 20th century. A long front porch lined with teak rocking chairs faces the Presidio's Main Post, a vast, grassy field that hosts frequent [events](#) and is an ideal place for picnics, Frisbee games, and afternoon naps. Inside, the three-story building opens up to a bright, light-filled lobby with classy navy-blue wall accents, oversized historic photographs and an art display that includes Ohlone stones discovered during excavation, and beautiful hardwood floors that are inlaid with a darker "ghost pattern" to show the original floor plan of the military company offices and artillery storage rooms.

Location

The Presidio is a place where coyotes still roam. This past spring, a litter of pups was born; at the time of our visit, the young coyotes were traveling through the park with their parents (to protect the pups, a section of the Bay Area Ridge Trail, which runs through the Presidio, was temporarily closed to dogs). Twenty-four miles of trails wind out the front door, through fragrant stands of eucalyptus and pine. Also within walking distance is the Golden Gate Bridge, where some of the best people-watching can be found on the ascent up the rust-hued span — “the United Nations of tourists,” observed my husband, affectionately, as one man, overstuffed rolling suitcase in hand, asked us to take his picture.



A junior suite at the Lodge at the Presidio. Rooms come with free Wi-Fi and coffee by the San Francisco roaster Equator for in-room brewing. Photo by: Paul Dyer

The Room

The 42 rooms feature high ceilings, comfortable pillow-top beds, and striped canvas headboards inspired by old military tents. Our king room had a view of the Golden Gate Bridge — or its lower half, anyway, on that foggy day. Guests looking to get work done will appreciate free Wi-Fi, desks with charging stations, and coffee by the Bay Area roaster Equator for in-room brewing.

The Bathroom

Spacious and flooded with natural light, thanks to a large, frosted-glass window next to the tub. White-tiled everything with black design detailing created a clean, classic feel; bath dispensers full of EO organic products in oatmeal and honey felt luxurious. I particularly liked the blue-and-white striped bathrobes lined with soft white terry.



Although there is no restaurant on the premises, a wine-and-cheese gathering takes place in the fireplace lounge every day from 5. p.m. to 7 p.m. Photo by: Paul Dyer

Amenities

A ring of blue Adirondack chairs surrounds a fire pit in the backyard; one evening, we saw a family making cozy use of the flames by roasting marshmallows. Every day the lodge hosts a complimentary breakfast buffet in the downstairs fireplace lounge, as well as a generous, well-attended wine and cheese gathering in the same place between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. These perks make the property feel convivial and communal. Overnight parking is just \$9 a night, a bargain in this town. There's no fitness center on site, but there is a limited supply of bicycles available, and the excellent [Presidio YMCA](#) offers free gym passes for lodge guests, including use of its swimming pool. The [PresidiGo shuttle](#) is also free, giving visitors easy access to downtown San Francisco.



The lobby's hardwood floors are inlaid with a darker “ghost pattern” to show the original floor plan of the military company offices and artillery storage rooms. Photo by: Paul Dyer

Dining

There is no in-house restaurant, but the Main Post has notable restaurants just steps away, including the chef Traci Des Jardins' Arguello — specializing in Mexican cuisine and named after Luis Antonio Arguello, a former commander of the Presidio and the first Mexican governor of Alta California — and her more casual Commissary, which features Spanish-accented dishes like Ibérico broth with mushrooms and fregola sarda. Both restaurants are run in partnership with the Presidio Trust. A five-minute drive will take you to the Presidio Social Club, a cheerful all-day restaurant with a line of bar stools at the counter that's pleasantly reminiscent of an old-school diner.

Bottom Line

A thoughtfully restored lodge and a comfortable home base from which to explore the intriguing, lesser-known history of the far northwest slice of San Francisco.

Lodge at the Presidio, 105 Montgomery Street, Presidio of San Francisco, San Francisco; presidiolodging.com/lodge-at-the-presidio